

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS DELIVERED BY HON. FIFI KWETEY,
MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT (REPUBLIC OF GHANA) AT THE
OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 2016 CANSO AFRICA
CONFERENCE HELD AT THE MOVENPICK HOTEL, ACCRA,
GHANA ON 13TH SEPTEMBER, 2016**

Colleague Ministers,

The Director General of CANSO,

The Board, management and Staff of GCAA and GACL,

The ICAO Regional Director, East and Southern Africa

The Chair of AFC 3, CANSO and CEO of ATNS

The Director Africa Affairs, CANSO'

*The Chief Executives, Directors - General and Heads of CAAs and Air
Navigation Services Providers here present,*

ICAO, CANSO, IATA and Industry Representatives present

Distinguished Delegates,

Invited Guests,

Friends from the Media,

Ladies & gentlemen

On behalf of His Excellency John Dramani Mahama, President of the Republic of Ghana and the People of Ghana, I take this opportunity to warmly welcome all of you to Ghana for this all important conference.

I wish to thank CANSO for the honour accorded me to address this conference and for choosing Ghana to host this august event. I am informed that some of you arrived here a couple of days ago and I believe you have experienced the proverbial Ghanaian hospitality.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

With the challenges associated with rapid air traffic growth globally and the corresponding need for an effective regulatory oversight, I find the conference theme, *“Ensuring Safe and Efficient Airspace - Separating Regulation from Service Provision”*, as indeed very appropriate. In this regard I wish to congratulate all those who have worked tirelessly to make this conference a reality.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have been reliably briefed about ICAO’s *“No Country Left Behind Initiative”* in ensuring compliance with all ICAO’s Standards and Recommended Practices. Thus there is an urgent need for increased collaboration and coordination among Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSPs). The Airline industry has demonstrated how strategic partnerships through alliances and code sharing arrangements can create synergies and

bring about efficiencies and cost effectiveness necessary for sustainable development of Air Transport.

In pursuit of CANSO's Vision 2020 towards a seamless Air Navigation Services or a Single Sky, there's an urgent need for ANSPs to adopt the approach of the airline industry by fostering strategic alliances, value creation and cooperation.

I therefore urge CANSO and the more endowed members of CANSO to help improve the operational efficiency of their weaker members. The global vision of seamless Air Traffic Management has no place for any weak link. No country can be left behind, Africa cannot be left behind!

I have also been informed of the ICAO / CANSO initiative of a Peer to Peer Review mechanism to address operational challenges in air navigation services provision through benchmarking and adopting best industry practices. Let me commend ICAO and CANSO for this initiative which will help Africa's ANSPs enhance operational safety and efficiency in their services provision.

The ICAO Universal Safety Oversight Audit Programme results for many African States revealed an extremely poor level of compliance in the area of Air Navigation Services oversight. This is indeed very disturbing as the presence of a strong and effective industry regulator will ensure safe and efficient air traffic management operations in our respective States and Flight Information Regions.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This forum should therefore identify the contributory factors and propose an action plan to address this deficiency. ICAO, CANSO, ANSPs and Regulators have a collective responsibility to improve the level of Effective Implementation in the ANS Audit Area.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

The aviation sub-sector in Ghana has undergone tremendous growth in the last couple of years both at the international level and at the domestic level. This is a reflection of the stable political, social and economic atmosphere and prudent policies of Government. We have made strides in aviation safety oversight, airports operations and in air navigation services provision. Ghana CAA's Director - General is the current chairperson of the Regional Aviation

Safety Group (RASG AFI); Ghana is a Champion State for the resolution of Significant Safety Concerns (SSCs) and has assisted a number of States in the region to resolve their safety deficiencies.

The Country has also achieved 100% implementation of Performance Based Navigation (PBN) at three (3) of its airports. This includes Standard Instrument Departures (SIDs) and Standard Arrival Routes (STARs) at three of the five airports in the country. Ghana has also implemented Continuous Climb Operations (CCOs) and Continuous Descent Operations (CDOs). These will ensure cost-effective aircraft operations through less fuel burn and also reduced carbon footprints on the environment.

The Government of Ghana recognises Aviation as a catalyst of economic growth and will continue to support the development of the aviation industry. The Kumasi Airport and Tamale Airports were recently upgraded with Category 2 runways. The Tamale airport runway has been extended to a length of 3400 metres and a width of 60 metres and new aprons to accommodate code E & F. The Tamale Airport commenced international operations on 19 August this year with the uplifting of several Hajj pilgrims directly from the airport to Jeddah.

Others are the Wa and Ho Airports which are nearing completion and the construction of a new passenger Terminal, Terminal 3, is underway at the Kotoka International Airport. His Excellency President John Mahama also recently commissioned the 7-storey Ghana Civil Aviation Training academy which is equipped with ultra-modern air traffic control training Simulators among other facilities.

The Upgrade of the Air Traffic Management(ATM) system at KIA is in progress. The construction of a new Air Navigation Services Complex equipped with the latest ATM System solutions is also under way. Ghana is in advanced discussions with AIREON for the implementation of Space – Based Automatic Dependence surveillance Broadcast (ADS-B) for the oceanic sector of the Accra FIR.

These and other completed and ongoing initiatives demonstrate the commitment of the government of the Republic of Ghana to the growth of the aviation industry.

The benefits of separating regulation from service provision are well known. The successes and achievements chalked by independent Air Navigation

Services Providers (ANSPs) here present is a testimony of how the separation of the two entities can ensure focus, eliminate conflict of interest, and increase operational efficiency and safety performance.

Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished guests,

I have no doubt that Ghana stands to gain greatly under a regime of an independent Regulator, separated from air navigation services provision. Our first decoupling initiative in 2006 separated airport operations from the CAA but maintained air navigation services provision as part of the Regulator. This initiative was undoubtedly a great success as we now have more efficient, focused and independent entities. We have also gained valuable lessons from the post - decoupling challenges and we are optimistic that the recent initiative of the Ministry of Transport and the GCAA to commence studies into the separation of air navigation services provision from the Regulator will be highly successful and bring about the needed operational benefits.

This conference therefore provides opportunity for Ghana to tap into the enormous knowledge and experience of independent ANSPs who have been on this journey before us.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have further been informed that at the heels of this Regional Conference, CANSO and the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) of the US will be organizing a 2-day Safety Seminar at the Ghana Aviation Training Academy dubbed “Incident Investigation in a Just Culture”. I will take this opportunity to urge participants to take advantage of the Academy to train their personnel in future.

There is no doubt that a reporting system that encourages people to voluntarily report potential hazards and safety events without fear of punitive actions will enhance the service provider’s safety management system. I will therefore urge participants to this safety Conference to embrace the “Just Culture” policy and the necessary institutional changes to promote and implement a Just Culture. A successful implementation will invariably contribute to a reduction in accident rates in Africa.

It is my expectation that at the end of your deliberations, the conference will come out with a communiqué which will be acceptable and workable within the industry and I trust that all the participants will enjoy the hospitality of the people of Ghana and ultimately their stay in the Republic of Ghana.

Ladies and gentlemen,

On this note and on behalf of the people and Government of Ghana, I have the singular honour to declare this conference duly opened. I wish you fruitful deliberations.

Thank you and may the Almighty God bless us all.